

California Biodiversity Council History

October 3, 2001

Background and Strategic Planning

The Council was formed as a result of recommendations from the Timberland Task Force, created in 1989 by the California Legislature. In preliminary discussions it became clear that a new high-level forum with state and federal members would be beneficial to both sides. Then Resources Agency Secretary Doug Wheeler formed a team to develop a MOU that would guide the continuing effort. In the preliminary formation of the MOU, legal counsel included Doug Wheeler, Michael Mantell, and Christine Sproul, all attorneys at the Resources Agency. After much discussion and debate among the various agencies, the MOU was completed and signatures gathered in Sept 1991. Initial signatories included 11 federal and state agencies and the University of CA, and in 1992 local governments signed a statement of intent in support of the MOU and agreed to actively participate as members. The Resources Agency Secretary was designated the chair for oversight and leadership. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) Chief at the time, Bob Ewing, also worked with the Resources Agency to develop the vision and strategic direction of the CBC. BLM Director, Ed Hastey, was very instrumental in communicating the vision and gathering the support of other agencies, and served as the Council vice chair. Agencies and locals became involved because they believed in the vision, and over the years the Council expanded to 38 agencies and local governments.

Administrative Support and Funding

Initially the Council was loosely supported by an Office Tech position in the CDF/FRAP office, Joanne Cemo (secretary to Bob Ewing). Local interests became concerned about a limited federal-state body and expressed a desire to have meetings around the state so their views could be heard. Since this would require more funds, it was decided to use membership dues (\$3250/year for state and federal agencies only) to keep the Council independent of any one source of funds. A member agency (Don Erman, Director of UCD Wildland Resources Center) offered fiscal support to the Council for collecting and depositing membership dues and other administrative support services in coordination with Joanne Cemo. The University provides this support in return for waived yearly dues. The Wildland Resources Center moved to UC Berkeley and is now under the direction of Rick Standiford.

In 1999, due to increased Council travel and activities (including managing editor of the Biodiversity News and formation of the website), a full-time assistant was hired by the Council through UC Berkeley (now Erin Klaesius, Administrative Specialist I), and was located at the FRAP offices under the supervision of Joanne Cemo (now an AGPA). Erin coordinates all day-to-day functions of the Council (communications to members, meeting logistics, dues collection, invoice processing, mailing list maintenance, webmaster for internet and intranet sites, and graphics design for newsletter and meeting programs). FRAP provides in-kind support in the way of budget oversight, supervision, office space, computers, printers, etc. Budget reports are generated and reported to the CBC Staff and Executive Committees.

Committees

The Executive Committee (see attached Charter) was formed when the Council started traveling around the state to listen to concerns in the various bioregions. The Staff Committee is actively involved in planning and oversight of the Council's activities. The Chairs of the two committees (Mike Chapel and Chris Nota - both with USFS) form a core team along with Erin, Bill Stewart (current FRAP Chief), Joanne Cemo, and an Agency staff rep (Stanley Young), as well as a Department of Conservation rep (Luree Stetson) and a BLM rep. The core team drafted the Work Plan in 1998 (see attached revised Work Plan), and the Council theme "strengthening ties with local and tribal governments to conserve biological diversity and enhance economic vitality" was adopted.

From: Kari Hammond [mailto:Kari.Hammond@OPR.CA.GOV]
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2001 9:32 AM
To: 'Joanne_cemo@fire.ca.gov'
Cc: Lbeutler Home (E-mail); Lbeutler Work (E-mail); Kari Hammond
Subject: FW: Questions for BioDiversity Council

Hi JoAnne,

Thank you for your willingness to share with us your experience in setting up the Admin functions for the BioDiversity Council. As I mentioned to you on the phone, I am working with Gary Darling to set up the Admin functions for a Statewide GIS Council. The GIS Council is comprised of executives from state govt., local govt., federal govt., universities and colleges, and tribal representation.

Gary, mentioned he would like to use the BioDiversity Council as a model for operating the GIS Council. Unfortunately, I am not completely familiar with your Council and its charter, so it might be helpful, if you could provide me a brief overview of your membership and your charter (goals and objectives) so that I can compare the similarities and differences.

Below are some questions that I have regarding Funding, General Admin, and General Support Staff functions. I am hoping that you may have addressed these same issues when you formed your Council. In addition it would be nice to know what the time frame and the stages were in setting up your Admin functions.

Legal:

1. Did you have legal review and approval of your charter? LEGAL REVIEW OF MOU BY RESOURCES AGENCY COUNSEL
2. Do you have any type of MOU's or Contracts with your Council members? MOU

Fiscal: Basically, we would like to know how the council is set up financially.

1. Under what authority (Governor's Budget) are you funded? THE \$3250 PER AGENCY IS PROCESSED LIKE OTHER MEMBERSHIP FEES THROUGH MEMBER AGENCIES' BUDGETS. Are you completely self-sustained through dues? YES
Do you have other fund sources? MEMBER AGENCIES' IN-KIND SUPPORT OR SPECIFIC DONATIONS.
2. Does the Dept of Finance approve your budget? NO. If so, who is your DOF analyst?
3. Did you have to submit a financial plan to Finance for approval? (Cost recovery/expenditure plan) NO
4. Do you collect membership fees? YES, STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES PAY DUES AT \$3250/YEAR NOT COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS
5. If so, how do you invoice the fees (annually, quarterly, etc.)? ANNUALLY
6. How are invoices processed to and from the Council? CHECK REQUESTS SUBMITTED TO UC BERKELEY BY ERIN
7. Where do you deposit the funds? (ARF, bank account, Service Revolving fund, etc.) UC REGENTS
8. How do you expend the funds? (service contracts, and purchase orders) GENERALLY CHECKS OR A PURCHASING CARD
9. What financial reports do you generate for the Council members? ANNUAL BUDGET REPORT
10. Are you subject to state audits? YES VIA UC BERKELEY
11. How are paychecks disbursed? UC BERKELEY

General Admin

1. Are your meetings subject to the Brown Act? (public notices) YES
2. What is the staffing level used to manage the BioDiversity Council's Administrative functions? FULL-TIME UC BERKELEY ADMIN SPEC I AND IN-KIND SUPPORT FROM MEMBER AGENCIES

3. Who manages the day-to-day business functions of the Council? ERIN, ADMIN SPECIALIST, UC BERKELEY

Correspondence & General Staff Support

1. Do you have staff responsible for preparing and disseminating information and correspondence to the Council? YES
2. Do you have staff responsible for meeting logistics? YES
3. Do you have staff responsible for completed staff work (research, analysis, etc.) for the BioDiversity Council's projects? NO, THE COUNCIL DOES NOT PRODUCE DOCUMENTS OF THAT NATURE